

## When Moving into a New Home, First Things First

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You have just completed the biggest financial transaction of your life and can now call yourself a homeowner. With the help of a Realtor<sup>®</sup>, a member of the National Association of Realtors<sup>®</sup>, you purchased your first home, signed all the necessary paperwork and are about to walk up to your front door, keys in hand.

As you walk through your brand new house, you are probably thinking, now what? This is a common question new homeowners ask themselves when the time comes to settle into a new home. With all the excitement and work involved in finding a first home, first-time buyers may not have a transition plan or a checklist for the first few days in their new house.

“Some checklist items are as simple as steam cleaning the carpet while others involve familiarizing yourself with your home’s circuit breakers and water valves. Having a game plan for your new home will give you peace of mind and allow you to settle in quickly and stress free,” said Sharon Zunkley.

Below are important items to focus on during the transition into your new home.

**Change the locks.** You never know who else has keys to your home, so it is a good idea to change the locks on all doors. This will help you sleep at night knowing that you are the only person who has access to your home. You can install new deadbolts yourself for less or call a locksmith to ensure proper installation.

**Set-up service.** This may not sound like a top priority, but it is important to contact local utilities and service providers, like trash pick-up to set-up a new account and avoid disruption. Make sure to familiarize yourself with the pick-up schedule for trash and recyclables to avoid garbage stacking up during the first week in your new home.

**Know the circuit breaker.** It is a good idea to figure out which fuses control what parts of your house and label them accordingly. You will need two people for this exercise: one person monitoring the power as it goes on and off and the other tripping the fuse in order to test the breakers.

**Buy the right tools.** It is likely you own the basic tools, such as a drill, screwdriver, hammer, level and tape measure. Yet, homeownership may require a few new ones you might not have needed before, such as a pry bar for removing nails, trim or tiles and a ratchet set for adjusting nuts and bolts in hard to reach places. When hanging pictures or shelving on the walls, be sure to have a stud sensor handy to detect studs, cables and ducts.

“When you are a new to homeownership, the list of responsibilities can feel overwhelming at first, but with the help of a Realtor<sup>®</sup>, you can be sure to transition into a new home in a smooth and hassle-free fashion,” said Zunkley.